

4-3-09

Legislative Activities

Tracking the Issues

Today (Friday, April 3) will conclude the main legislative session. The legislature will take a three week break, returning on April 29th to convene the veto session.

There will not be a *Pulse* during the legislature's break, but please keep an eye out for an issue on Friday, May 1st.

April 15, 2009
Consensus caseload estimates released

April 17, 2009
Consensus revenue Estimates released.

April 29, 2009
Veto Session begins, legislator's return

KHPA Gearing Up for SCHIP Expansion; *Agency to Seek Additional Resources*

More than 9,300 uninsured Kansas children could receive affordable health coverage under the expanded State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) that lawmakers approved this session. At the same time, however, the expansion will put even more administrative pressure on the Kansas Health Policy Authority, adding to the workload that is already growing due to the economic downturn.

As a result, KHPA officials plan to ask lawmakers for additional administrative funding when the legislature returns April 29 to pass the final, "omnibus" appropriations bill.

The expanded eligibility will take effect Jan. 1, 2010. KHPA estimates about 4,600 newly eligible children will be enrolled in the first six months, and more than 9,300 will enroll by FY 2013.

"This is a very important step forward for the state of Kansas," said KHPA Executive Director Marcia Nielsen. "So many people have lost their jobs in recent months, and many more working families are finding it difficult, or even impossible to keep their private health insurance. But it's going to be a big challenge for KHPA to keep up with the workload, and that's why we'll be asking lawmakers for additional resources.

The budget bill provides funding for an expansion of SCHIP that lawmakers first authorized in 2008. Under the plan, the income limit for eligibility will increase from 200 percent to 250 percent of the 2008 federal poverty level. That translates to \$35,000 a year for a family of two, and \$44,000 a year for a family of three. That income limit will remain tied to the 2008 poverty level in future years.

Premiums for those who become newly eligible will be \$50 a month for families with incomes between 200 and 225 percent of the poverty level, and \$75 per month for families with incomes between 226 and 250 percent of the poverty level.

Funding for the state's share of the expanded program in FY 2010 will come from state tobacco settlement funds.

Agency Activities

KHPA Board Executive Committee Meeting

Date: April 9th
Time: 3:30–5:00 pm
Location: Landon State Office Bldg, Room 9E

KHPA Board Finance and Audit Committee Meeting

Date: April 13th
Time: 3:00–4:30 pm
Location: Landon State Office Bldg

KHPA Board Meeting

Date: April 21st
Time: 8:30 am–4:30 pm
Location: Ramada Inn, Madison Room, 420 SE 6th Street, Topeka

Employee Advisory Committee

Date: April 22nd
Time: 10:30 am
Location: Landon State Office Bldg, Room 106

New! The Personal Health Assessment is now available from April 1 through September 30, 2009. All [eligible participants](#) who complete the online Personal Health Assessment (PHA) using results obtained from a health screening event or doctor visit will earn a \$50 gift card. For more information, please visit our [Website](#).

Lawmakers Set to Adjourn Regular Session

No Resolution Yet on Clean Indoor Air Bill

Kansas lawmakers were set to adjourn the 2009 regular session late Friday, with no agreement reached so far on a statewide Clean Indoor Air bill.

Earlier this week, the House and Senate passed and sent to Gov. Kathleen Sebelius a \$13 billion budget bill that takes advantage of new federal stimulus dollars in order to fully fund the expected Medicaid caseloads for the upcoming year. The stimulus program increases the federal government's share of the cost of Medicaid. Kansas expects to receive at least \$100 million in additional federal Medicaid funding in Fiscal Year 2010.

Friday afternoon, House and Senate negotiators were reportedly trying to reach agreement on a clean indoor air bill, but no progress was reported later in the day.

The legislature will be on break until April 29th when they'll return to pass a final, "omnibus" budget bill and address any bills or budget items vetoed by the governor.

During the interim, state budget officials will release new, updated estimates of state revenues and medical caseload expenses for the coming year. Caseload estimates are scheduled to be announced Wednesday, April 15. The new revenue estimates are scheduled to be announced on Friday, April 17.

Upcoming Event:

The Kansas Department on Aging, Kansas Area Agencies on Aging Association and AARP Kansas are sponsoring a Senior 911 Summit entitled "Partnering Through Hard Times" on May 7 at the Kansas Expocentre's Maner Conference Center in Topeka. Attendance will be limited to 250, and registrations are due May 1. More information on the summit, online registration and mail-in registration forms are available online at www.agingkansas.org

KHPA Pulse is a publication by the KHPA Communications Team distributed weekly during the legislative session. If you have questions or comments, contact the Public Information Officer Peter Hancock at 785/296.5603 or peter.hancock@khpas.gov